



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 10 2011

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Ralph J. Cicerone, Ph.D.
President, National Academy of Sciences
Chairman, National Research Council
500 5th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Dr. Cicerone:

I would like to confirm the request from me and the secretaries of the departments of Agriculture, Commerce and Interior that the National Research Council convene a committee of independent experts to review scientific and technical issues that have arisen as our departments and agencies seek to meet their respective responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act.

The recent experience of completing consultations under the ESA for FIFRA-related actions affecting Pacific salmon has illustrated a number of scientific issues. The scientific and technical topics on which we seek advice pertain to the approaches utilized by the EPA, the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of Interior and the National Marine Fisheries Service of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in assessing the effects of proposed FIFRA actions on endangered species and their habitats. These topics include the identification of best-available scientific data and information; consideration of sub-lethal, indirect and cumulative effects; the effects of chemical mixtures and inert ingredients; the use of models to assist in analyzing the effects of pesticide use; incorporating uncertainties into the evaluations effectively; and the use of geospatial information and datasets that can be employed by the departments and agencies in the course of these assessments.

These issues are scientifically complex and of high importance. A concerted, closely coordinated effort to address them openly and actively will assist in the proper execution of the statutory responsibilities under the ESA, FIFRA and other applicable laws.

The EPA and the departments of Agriculture, Commerce and Interior stand ready to work with your designees to refine the scope of the effort as appropriate and otherwise assist in the execution of this review.

I look forward to working with the NRC to obtain advice on these timely and important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Jackson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa P. Jackson